

Message Text

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54

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 CU-04 AF-10 NEA-14 AID-20 PC-10 DRC-01 /148 W

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R 011015Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4833

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY ULNGAPORE

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 7805

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, RP

SUBJECT: CONTINUING REACTION OF ISLAMIC FOREIGN MINISTERS'
CONFERENCE

REF: MANILA 7739

1. OVER THE WEEKEND THE GOVERNMENT HAS SIGNELED IN SEVERAL RELATED AND HEAVILY PUBLICIZED MOVES ITS ACUTE SENSITIVITY TO THE COMMUNIQUE OF THE ISLAMIC FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE. MOVES PRETEND THAT GOVERNMENT POLICY GUIDED COMMUNIQUE RATHER THAN VICE VERSA BUT NEVERTHELESS SEEM RESPONSIVE.

2. FIRST MOVE WAS TAKEN BY PRESIDENT MARCOS IN JUNE 28 MEETING WITH LARGE NUMBER OF MUSLIM OFFICIALS WHO HAD BEEN BROUGHT UP TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT. HE HANDED OVER AMNESTY CERTIFICATES TO SO-CALLED FORMER REBELS BELONGING TO THE ALLEGEDLY "NOW DISMANTLED" MORO NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT
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AND INDUCTED SOME OF THEM INTO POLITICAL OFFICES, IN-

CLUDING ONE MUSLIM AS A COMELEC COMMISSIONER. HE APPOINTED
BRIG. GEN. LAO AS HEAD OF A MILITARY CONTINGENT OF CULTURAL
MINORITIES AND ALSO FORMALIZED THE CREATION OF A PEACE
COMMISSION TO HANDLE THE GRANTING OF AMNESTY
TO ALL INSURGENTS

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3. PRESIDENT MARCOS ANNOUNCED THAT SAUDI ARABIAN MINISTER
SAQQAFF HAD TELEPHONED TO EXPRESS HIS CONGRATULATIONS ON THE
PHILIPPINE EFFORTS TO UPLIFT THE CONDITIONS OF ITS MUSLIM
POPULATION. (EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS MARCOS CALLED SAQQAFF).

4. PRESIDENT ANNOUNCED AT LUNCHEON FOR VISITING LEBANESE
FOREIGN MINISTER NAFFAH ON JUNE 29 THAT GOVERNMENT "REJECTS
AND WILL CONTINUE TO REJECT A MILITARY SOLUTION TO ITS PROB-
LEMS IN MUSLIM MINDANAO AND WILL INSTEAD CONTINUE TO PURSUE
A FULL SCALE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PROGRAM FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF THE COUNTRY'S MINORITIES." HE SAID SOME
SECTORS IN FOREIGN PRESS HAD ACCUSED HIM OF WEAKNESS FOR
REFUSING TO SMASH SECESSIONISTS. HE HAD NOT USED FULL FORCE
OF AFP BECAUSE, HE SAID, "FORCE HAS NEVER BEEN ACCEPTABLE OR
EFFECTIVE SOLUTION TO ANY SOCIAL OR ECONOMIC PROBLEM...A
CLASSIC CASE IS VIET-NAM." HE CONTINUED, "SOMETHING IN ME
DIES EVERY TIME SOMEONE IS KILLED IN THIS CONFLICT." INSTEAD,
GOVERNMENT WILL EXPAND ITS PROGRAM IN MINDANAO, USING 5 MILLION
KUWAITI DINAR LOAN TO PHILIPPINES EXCLUSIVELY FOR PROJECTS
IN MINDANAO.

5. COMMENT: TORTUOUS FORMULATIONS ABOVE ARE EXPRESSIVE,
WE BELIEVE, OF (A) GENUINE GOP DESIRE TO SOLVE PROBLEM;
(B) UNCERTAINTY AS TO HOW AND WHERE TO BEGIN. GREATEST UN-
CERTAINTY STEMS FROM FACT THAT EVEN IF GOP AGREES TO HOLD
POLITICAL TALKS WITH MUSLIM FACTIONS INCLUDING MNLF, IT
HAS NO ASSURANCE THAT FACTIONS WILL BE WILLING TO SEEK
REASONABLE COMPROMISE, AND NO GUARANTEE THAT TALKS MAY NOT
IN FACT STIMULATE RATHER THAN SUBDUE FIGHTING. FACT REBELS
ARE CONTINUING RATHER HIGH LEVEL OF HIT AND RUN TACTICS
BEGUN BEFORE ISLAMIC FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE UNDOUBT-
EDLY GIVES GOP PAUSE. GOP WILL NO DOUBT LOOK TO DR. AL-TOHMY,
WHO IS NOW HERE, FOR CLUES ON WHAT TO DO, AND HOW CLOSELY
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ISLAMIC CONFERENCE WILL SCRUTINIZE GOP'S COMPLIANCE WITH
COMMUNIQUE.
SULLIVAN

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